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plements of "Years Between," — "A Midsummer Night's Dream," — "Irene"



by Alexander Bender

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Edited by Frances Stephens

May, 1945

Over the Footlights

WHILE events on the Continent follow one another with incredible speed and dramas are being played out in Europe which make the bloodiest enactments in the theatre look like pale ghosts of the ordinary, it is not easy to keep one's perspective. All the same, two productions of the past month can justly be called "theatrical events": they are Emlyn Williams's new play at the St. James's and *The Duchess of Malfi* (produced too late for full review), at the Haymarket. *The Wind of Heaven* has aroused great interest. Many consider it Mr. Williams's best play and none would deny the boldness of its theme or the great heights of poetry reached by the author. The superb revival of Webster's play is an experience not to be missed; this is theatre with a capital T and we are left wondering why this powerful play is comparatively rarely produced; unless perhaps it is that seldom can great acting, brilliant stage technique and décor and magnificence of production have met together as they have at the Haymarket.

We go to press before *Desert Rats*, the play about the Eighth Army, starring Richard Greene, opened at the Adelphi, and judging by pre-London impressions this may be yet another event which will prove heartening to those who are constantly deploring the lack of new plays. Also produced too late for review this month were Ivor Novello's big new musical, *Perchance to Dream*, at the Hippodrome; that delightful Labiche comedy, *An Italian Straw Hat*, at the Arts; the revival of *While Parents Sleep*, starring Phyllis Dixey, at the Whitehall, and *Laugh, Town, Laugh*, Jack Hilton's revue at the Stoll.

A new management, Peter Daubeny, Ltd., is presenting as its first production William Lipscomb's play *Gay Pavilion*, set in court circles at the time of George III and George IV, with Mary Ellis as Mrs. Fitzherbert and John Byron, Muriel Aked, Frank Allenby and Frederick Valk in support. Michael Redgrave will play the Colonel in this management's second production, *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, the big American success. Karel Stepanek will be Jacobowsky.

Bernard Delfont, whose *Gay Rosalinda* is a triumph at the Palace Theatre, is shortly to present a new musical, *Big Boy*, which will have as its stars the interesting team of Fred Emney, Richard Hearne and Carol Raye.

The new production at the Embassy due at the beginning of May is a new three-act play by James Parish, entitled *Letters of a Lady*, starring Louise Hampton. Another interesting forthcoming production is *The Cure for Love* by Walter Greenwood, author of *Love on the Dole*, in which Robert Donat will appear under his own management. Linnit and Dunfee are presenting *Ah, Josephine!* a play by Marjorie Coryn, with Ursula Jeans, Margaretta Scott, Hugh Burden and Raymond Huntley. *June Mad*, a charming American comedy presented by James Shirvell, is on a prior-to-London tour, with Phyllis Dare starring.

And, looking ahead, there is Noel Coward's new revue, *Sigh No More*, which will be presented by H. M. Tennent at the Opera House, Manchester, on July 11th for a four weeks' season prior to the West End. This will be the first Coward revue to be seen in this country since *Words and Music* in 1932. F.S.

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P642A

New Shows of the Month

- "Irene"—His Majesty's, March 21st.
(See pages 22-24)
- "The Assassin"—Savoy, March 22nd.
- "Yellow Sands"—Westminster, March 29th.
- "The Gaieties"—Winter Garden, March 29th.
- "Appointment With Death"—Piccadilly, March 31st.
- "The Yellow Star"—Unity, April 6th.
- "Lady from Edinburgh"—Playhouse, April 10th.
- "The Shop at Sly Corner"—St. Martin's, April 11th.
- "The Wind of Heaven"—St. James's, April 12th.

"The Gaieties"

CONSIDERING the strength of the company this revue is disappointing. It lacks cohesion and some of the material is definitely below standard.

However, with Leslie Henson, Hermione Baddeley and Walter Crisham leading the revels there is bound to be much to amuse. Among the sketches one of the best is "Tomorrow the Lants," in which Leslie Henson and Hermione Baddeley wickedly impersonate the great stars, and Walter Crisham appears as the young Nazi strayed out of *Tomorrow the World*. There is also Hermione Baddeley in "Very Prudish Nude" and it is not difficult to guess the subject of this amusing skit. Walter Crisham repeats by request his clever monologue as a very lonely American soldier in Parliament Square. One of the high spots of the show is the dancing of Walter Crisham and Prudence Hyman and others who shine are Graham Payn and Avril Angers. Carroll Gibbons conducts the band and also appears on the stage in the finale. F.S.

"The Assassin"

THIS is a play of atmosphere and excitement by an American with the national flair for speed and the cinematic technique. But more than this Irwin Shaw has a sense of the tragedy of youth in the years since 1939, and is not afraid to mix adventure and philosophy.

The story is of a group of young people—members of the underground movement—in Algiers at the time of the Allied invasion in 1942. The background is the Darlan story and the intrigue and bewilderment that abounded in those fateful weeks before the assassination. The "hero" is a young Royalist who becomes linked with the patriots by pure chance, and equally by chance finds himself an assassin. He is in all respects a normal healthy young man who does not want to die and who has indeed been led to believe that he will not have to make the supreme sacrifice. In so far he may not appeal as a real hero, who would gladly lay down his life for his cause, but for my part there was a strange fascination in the character of de Mauny, and the nobility he achieved in his speech at certain fall had a great ring of authenticity.

The long cast is excellent to the smallest part, but chief honours must go to Barry Morse as Robert de Mauny and Rosalyn Boulter as Hélène the young war widow. These two fall in love, but tragedy stalks their path. Arthur Young gives a sinister touch to Admiral Vespéry, whose life is forfeit to the intrigues of his officers, notably General Mousset (a suave performance by J. H. Roberts) aided by a corrupt member of the police in the shape of Henry Oscar who gives a splendid performance as Victor Malassis. The production by Marcel Varnel is flawless. F.S.

"Appointment with Death"

AVOIDING by a narrow margin the perils of a rather incredible hypnotism and a facade of medical eminence, Agatha Christie's adaptation of her novel re-opens the Piccadilly Theatre with an evening of that pleasurable tension associated with "who done it" problems of the better type. The author takes a real risk in disposing of her malevolent Mrs. Boynton at a halfway moment, but she survives this danger in construction with a closing act of sufficient movement and interest.

Mary Clare broods over the proceedings with all the suggestion of evil incarnate needed to subdue a young family, and if the younger Boyntons, especially the males, sag at the knees a little too readily, the author knows her danger and is swift to move on. Deryn Kerbey, Ian Lubbock and John Wynn are the step-children, repressed and distorted, needing and finding a strengthening balance in the young wife of Nadine Boynton, played by Beryl Machin with a sense of power handling inadequate material, and the young fiancée of Sarah King, played by Carla Lehmann with a natural and inevitable emphasis on her attractive young womanhood rather than on her medical skill. Fortunately for her, the professional weight is shared by Gerard Hinze as the famous French specialist. If at times he is reduced to a rather impotent head clutching at the psychological mysteries of Ginevra's

(Continued overleaf)

young mind, we are prepared to grant such an attractive Frenchman his clinic in Paris.

Success for this play may rest largely with the pleasant relief, for it includes a quartette of characters to lighten the darkest mysteries. Percy Walsh makes Alderman Higgs the perfect plebeian foil for the strident hauteurs of Janet Burnell's Lady Westholme. Harold Berens misses none of the Dragoman's opportunities to keep the tourist pot boiling, and as one of his victims Joan Hickson's Welsh spinster is true to life.

F.J.D.

"The Yellow Star"

UNITY are to be congratulated again for another sincere and moving production. Written by Ted Willis, their own playwright, *The Yellow Star* deals with the treatment of the Jews in Poland by the Nazis. Although, perhaps, a difficult choice of subject, the play is, on the whole, very well acted, and contains some outstanding performances, notably those of David Kossof as the old Rabbi, and Anita Davis as a Jewish woman. The Nazis are all presented as convincing characters—a welcome change, and throughout the entire play one feels that the author knows the subject intimately.

D.E.E.

"Lady from Edinburgh"

THIS comedy by Aimée Stuart and L. A. Rose repeats something of the formula of Miss Stuart's delightful *Jeannie*; it has less charm than the previous Cinderella story, and in the early stages its pace is

slow and its wit forced. The story of the brisk and managing little Scotswoman who descends on her southern relations and attempts, with the best and most maddening will in the world, to arrange their lives for them, later gathers speed and fun; the lines take on a more pointed sparkle, and the little Scot grows in warmth and sympathy, managing her niece's straying love affair to more happy purpose, and establishing herself in heart, home and marriage with a mixture of pawky Scotch commonsense and romantic guilelessness.

This character, written with the deftness and warmth that inform Miss Stuart's domesticated comedy at its best, is beautifully played by Sophie Stewart, an actress expert in emotion as in repartee and capable of a depth of real feeling which at one moment almost bursts the airy bubble of the plot. The play is her's from the moment she steps on the stage. Meanwhile Richard Bird dithers and postulates engagingly as a fantastically absent-minded stage genius, not essentially likeable or believable, although the audience showed every sign of delight at the creation. The character falls outside Miss Stuart's natural *flair*, which is for the creation of human nonentities. Her harassed father and scatterbrain mother (Henry Hewitt and Enid Sass, both of whom might give more sting and clarity to their opening scene, especially in the matter of speaking up) are neatly touched in, and the young lovers, played with unusual sincerity and understanding by Dulcie Gray and Alan Haines, grapple with the problems of the economics of marriage, parting and subsequent distrust with an urgency that rings true. Ethel Coleridge as a war-time "treasure" is a Mrs. Gummidge of servantland, rigid in disapproval and drooping of jowl, and the comedy's mixture of sentimental humour and Scotch commonsense, excellently directed by Charles Hickman, may well appeal to war-time audiences.

A.W.



John Vickers

NICHOLAS PHIPPS

who gives an excellent performance in the role originally played by Cecil Parker, in Noel Coward's record-breaking comedy, *Blithe Spirit*, at the Duchess Theatre.

"The Shop at Sly Corner"

NOT one of the usual and longed-for succulent ingredients is missing from this plummy pudding of romance-thriller at the St. Martins. It is a carefully constructed and well-sustained drama with a whole network of interesting undercurrents. In the most satisfactorily detailed setting of a rich jeweller's room-behind-a-shop sits Descius Heiff in a coat of purple velvet. And we soon learn that this imperious but likeable Alsatian has a grin and still potent past. What more would you? Blackmail and throttling? Poison darts and suicide? Burglary and body in red car? The damning clue and the ominously stilled gentleman from Scotland Yard? The snappings of taut nerves, the horror of climax, the relief of anti-climax, the mixture of badinage and bloody murder? Well, they're all here for

the seeing, and there is a pendant love-story too. Edward Percy's thriller is well served by all concerned: Keneth Kent and Victoria Hopper as Heiss father and daughter, Kathleen Nesbitt as Heiss sister, John Carol as the bad bad lot, Ernest Jay as the good bad lot, Joyce Heron as the friend who puts two and two together, William Roderick as the impeccable fiancé who comforts the peccant father, Deryck Guyler as the law, and Rowland Bartrop as Steve. And Ada Reeve manages to evoke new laughter with the venerable jokes of bad feet, indigestion and addiction to the bottle. Here is good relaxation and fun, as well as a dose of horror.

E.M.H.

“The Wind of Heaven”

EMLYN WILLIAMS' Welsh-mountain version of the Second Advent, his miracle-working, music-making Redeemer of a sceptical village (who is the illegitimate son of a serving-woman) have had a mixed reception. This is insincere, say some; this is a fine flowering of revivalist enthusiasm, say others; whichever way you look at it, say some others, it is rather embarrassing, you know.

Briefly, the tale concerns Dilys Parry (inconsolable Crimean war-widow and incomparable Diana Wynyard) and her gradual reawakening to life once the Miracle-boy's influence begins to permeate her home and the village of Blestin—a village that has no children, and sings no songs, and worships no God, since a great disaster snatched away all its youth. It concerns Bet the maid, the Boy's mother (Megs Jenkins)—a modest but sterling person who is not without her own intuitions and perceptions. Dilys' niece Menna (Dorothy Edwards) is the young-love interest, and it is her betrothed, dead of Crimean typhus, whom the child restores to life before he himself dies in agony. Evan Howell (Herbert Lomas) is the Celtic gloom and the Celtic fervour and the Celtic spirit of prophecy. But well in the centre of stage and plot stands Ambrose Ellis, the outrageous and flashy showman from Birmingham (Emlyn Williams), who comes as a would-be exploiter of the boy's gifts and becomes his haggard and world-forsaking disciple despite clever intervention of the seductive Mrs. Lake (Barbara Couper).

Perhaps it is a pity that quite soon after Ambrose's appearance one resents his elaborate façade of bad manners: only the most delicately nurtured, one feels, could command such truly polished boorishness. But Pitter (Arthur Hambling) is a flawless blend of protector, critic, producer, and foil. And even if faith in the working-out of the plan should fail, one is ever aware of the skill, delicacy and intelligence of Diana Wynyard and Megs Jenkins.

E.M.H.



Alexander Bender

MURIEL PAVLOW

as Lady Elizabeth Randall, the role she has taken over from Jane Baxter in *While the Sun Shines*, Terence Rattigan's amusing comedy, which is now well past its 500th performance at the Globe.



John Vickers

KATHLEEN KENT

who appears at the Lyric in that other brilliant Rattigan success, *Love in Idleness*, starring the Lunts. Miss Kent plays the part of Lady Fletcher.

Sadler's Wells Ballet Returns

THE Sadler's Wells Ballet returned to the New Theatre for a ten-week season on April 17th, the programme consisting of *The Rake's Progress*, *Carnaval* and *Hamlet*, a strong representative selection of modern English and Russian classics. *The Rake's Progress* is not strictly speaking a suitable "first ballet"; both company and audience need to warm up to it, and the virulent yet pitiable tragedy of the *finale* accentuates the thematic flimsiness of Fokine's porcelain romance. The dancing *ensemble* in both ballets was also ragged, although the accumulative power of Robert Helpmann's miming as the Rake, with its Hogarthian blend of viciousness and lacerating pathos, finally welded the performance into a cohesive whole. He was finely supported by Julia Farron in a most moving and eloquently danced performance of the Betrayed Girl. Pamela May's Chiarina in *Carnaval* was notable for its bright sweeping fluidity and precision, and Michael Some, returned to this company after several years in the Armed Forces, mimed the part of Pierrot with excellent restraint and feeling for the musical line.

The high-tension dramatic vision of *Hamlet*, mimed by Helpmann with a deep

and expressive sense of suffering, closed the programme with exciting effect.

AUDREY WILLIAMSON.

"Yellow Sands"

CEDRIC HARDWICKE has returned to the West End theatre with great success in his original part of Richard Varwell in a delightful revival of Eden Philpotts' *Yellow Sands*. The play wears well and the events in the quiet village have not lost their humour and attraction for present day audiences. Susan Richmond as Miss Jennifer also plays her original role and others in the cast are James Harcourt as Thomas Major; Alan Rolfe and Graeme Muir as Arthur and Joe Varwell; Muriel George as Mary Varwell; Lawrence Hanray as Mr. Baslow; Marjorie Lane as Emma; and Marjorie Woods and Rita Daniel as the twins.

Robert Donat is presenting this revival and its success confirms the sure touch he has had ever since he took over the Westminster as actor-manager two years ago. The production is also notable in that it marks Sir Cedric Hardwicke's first stage appearance in London since his return from America.

F.S.

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Diana: Richard, how lovely and thoughtful. I was hoping you would come in.

A moment from Act I, Scene 1, which takes place in the winter of 1942, a few weeks after Diana Wentworth has been notified that her husband's plane has crashed in the Mediterranean. She returns home from a visit to London to find that her friend, Richard Llewellyn, a neighbouring farmer, has called.

L. to R.: RONALD WARD as Richard Llewellyn, JOHN GILPIN as Robin, NORA SWINBURNE as Diana Wentworth and HENRIETTA WATSON as Nanny.

“*The Years Between*” AT WYNDHAMS

DAPHNE DU MAURIER'S latest play, which H. M. Tennent, Ltd., are presenting by arrangement with Howard Wyndham and Bronson Albery, brings Clive Brook back to the stage after twenty years in a strong and difficult role which he plays with great understanding and skill.

The Years Between is a story of topical appeal, posing a problem which in varying degrees must be faced by many people in these days when families have been scattered and long separations endured by thousands of young married people. In this case Michael Wentworth, a Colonel M.P., voluntarily “disappears” for three years to work with the underground movements in occupied Europe and returns to England nerve strained and embittered only to find himself unable to pick up the threads of his

old life at home. His wife, after three years' “widowhood”—during which time she has successfully followed a political career in her husband's constituency—has fallen in love with an old friend. On her husband's return, she renounces her new-found happiness, but cannot recapture their old relationship, although there is at the end a glimpse of a new understanding.

Nora Swinburne plays the part of Diana Wentworth with sensitive insight and great dignity and Ronald Ward brings good sense and real sympathy to the role of Richard Llewellyn, the man Diana would have married but for her husband's return. The other members of the cast give excellent support, particularly Henrietta Watson as Nanny, Allan Jeayes as Sir Ernest Foster and John Gilpin as Diana's young son.

PICTURES BY ALEXANDER BENDER

Diana: I'm going to stand for North Arlsea in Michael's place. Is that rather a shock to you?

Richard: It is.

Diana tells Richard that after consultation with Michael's friend, Sir Ernest Foster, a member of the Cabinet, she has decided to stand for her husband's seat in Parliament.



(Below):

Diana: Michael . . .
Michael darling. . . .

Michael comes through on the 'phone from Portsmouth and Diana, overwhelmed, lifts the receiver to speak to the husband she has thought dead for three years.

(Above):

Sir Ernest: Diana always strikes the right note, and I know from painful experience that she'll get exactly what she wants out of all of you.

A scene from Act I, Scene 2. It is late summer, 1945, and Diana who was returned to Westminster unopposed, has proved herself a successful M.P. She has just made a speech in the grounds of her house, the Old Manor. It is now three years since Michael's death was announced and Diana and Richard, who are very much in love with each other have decided to get married. It is now that the dramatic message comes through that Michael, whose movements had been hidden for security reasons, even from Sir Ernest, is landed in England, worn out and exhausted after his amazing adventures on the continent.

(In background of picture above: Geoffrey Morris as the Vicar, Lilian Christine as the Vicar's wife, and Allan Jeayes as Sir Ernest Foster.)





venning: Is this box to go to the kitchen, madam?

Diana: Yes, please. Nanny, this is Venning, the Colonel's new servant. He joined us to-day.

The opening scene in Act I, scene 3. Diana has motored to Portsmouth to fetch Michael who returns home with Venning, his servant, who is duly introduced to Nanny and installed in the house.

Arthur Chesney as Venning.



(Right):

Colonel Wentworth returns home. He has left the car further back and walked up through the woods to enter the library quietly by the French windows, like a man in a dream.

(Clive Brook as Michael Wentworth.



Michael: I used to try and imagine this when I was—out there. And it was strange, because the picture I made of it was so clear. There were always roses in a white bowl. There's the white bowl, but alas—no roses.



Michael: Do you remember Ted?

Robin: It's the one you used to keep in your dressing-room. I'd forgotten all about it. Do you mean to say you took it to the war and didn't lose it?

Diana: I wanted your home coming to be peaceful, happy. And now, on the very first evening, I've spoilt it for you.

Michael: You haven't spoilt it for me. I'm to blame. I might have known the picture could not have come quite true.

Michael begins to take stock of his home, wife and son.



Diana : I was thinking how funny it was, you and I, sitting here together. Just like it used to be.

Almost—almost as though nothing had ever happened.

Michael : Has anything happened?

Diana : No—No, of course not. Only—the war.



Michael : The woman I married died with me when I crashed into the sea in '42.

Diana : I've tried very hard to be the woman you remembered.

Diana a month later finds herself still unhappy in the presence of this new cynical Michael.



Michael : Here I am, like an evil ghost, peering at you over your shoulder, breaking your new world to pieces.

Diana : I don't want a new world. I only want the men and women who live in it to be happy.



Sir Ernest: Three years was a long time to lie dead, Michael.

Michael: Isn't that just what I've been trying to tell you?

Sir Ernest has been instructed by the Government to ask Michael to undertake another mission on the Continent, but Michael refuses. He is bitter and unhappy and has been unable to recapture his old outlook on life. He resents the change in Diana and her absorption in her political work, though Diana has announced she will relinquish her seat in Parliament. Later, however, he learns by chance that Diana and Richard were to have been married and he begins to see the extent of his wife's sacrifice.



Diana: Perhaps this is the last time we shall be alone together. I want you to kiss me.

Richard has bought a farm in Wales and comes to say goodbye to Diana.

Michael: To your brave new world, Diana.

The armistice is announced and the war in Europe is at an end. The family drink to the future, but there seems little happiness ahead for Diana and Michael.



Michael: That Sunday in September, when war was declared. We went to church together. You were wearing a blue check suit. Suddenly the siren went—it was a false alarm—but we didn't know that. You put out your hand to me. It was in middle of the creed.

Later that evening Michael recalls the early days of the war with a new understanding.

Diana: How could he leave me, as he did, smiling, cheerful, knowing what he was going to do, without a word or hint of any kind?

Sir Ernest: He happened to be rather fond of his country.

Diana learns for the first time that Michael's disappearance three years ago was pre-arranged.



Michael: Goodnight, darling.

The closing moments of the play. Michael decides after all to undertake the proposed mission in Europe. His mood is changing and he bids Diana good-bye with a note of tenderness in his voice. They arrange to meet at Diana's flat in Town next day, and as the curtain falls we feel that perhaps Diana's sacrifice will not have been in vain!



Holte

Right (L-R):

MOIRA LISTER

who plays Desdemona, Olivia and Juliet, is seen in the picture as Olivia in *Twelfth Night*.

ANTHONY EUSTREL

returns for the second year running in the parts of Benedick, Ford, Iago, Antony and Henry VIII, and is portrayed here as Iago in *Othello*.

GEORGE SKILLAN

who plays Othello, also appears, by way of contrast, as Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*.



Stratford Fes

1945

● The Shakespeare Festival opens on March 31st with a performance of *Nothing*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. The plays in this year's repertoire are *Windsor, Othello, Twelfth Night, Eighth, Romeo and Juliet, She Stoops to Conquer*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. The players portrayed here are Lyel, David Peel, Mary W. E. Holloway. Our review of the season with

CLAIRE LUCE

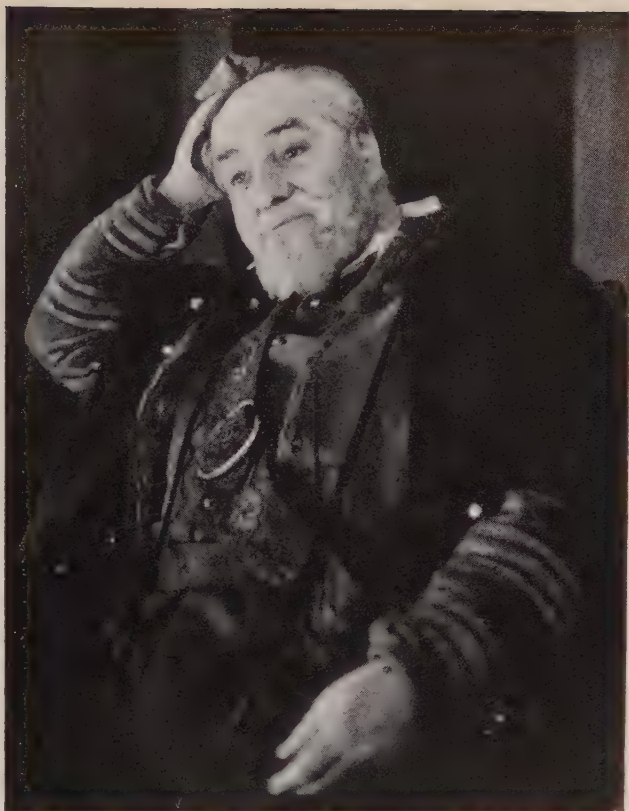
the famous American actress, whose first appearance at Stratford—a happy compliment to our allies—has aroused much interest, plays Beatrice, Mistress Ford, Viola and Cleopatra. Miss Luce is pictured here as Viola in *Twelfth Night*.

on-Avon al SON

most successfully on
of *Much Ado About*
ea was the Birthday
April 23rd. Other
The Merry Wives of
King Henry the
Goldsmith's comedy,
dition to the leading
pany includes Viola
Tristan Rawson and
will contain a full
om the plays.

ROBERT ATKINS

Director of the Festival.
ese first season last year
ss such an outstanding
ccess, has produced all the
ys in this season's reper-
ry and in addition appears
Sir Toby Belch, Sir John
astaff (see picture) and
Wolsey.



Theatrical Moscow Listens to British Actors

BY NIKOLAI VOLKOV

THE Shakespearean Studies Section of the All-Russian Theatre Society arranged an audition of tone discs which had been presented to Soviet actors by British actors. It was an original and sincere form of greeting—the voices of contemporary London actors delivering monologues from Shakespeare's plays in the Moscow Actors' Club.

The hall was filled with representatives of theatrical Moscow—actors, critics, young students—all assembled to listen to the great dramatist's words pronounced by his compatriots.

Professor Mikhail Morozov, prominent Soviet Shakespearean scholar, gave a short address on the subject of the programme. Four huge, black shining discs recorded fragments from *Henry V*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Twelfth Night*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus*, *Cymbeline*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*; twelve splendid gems of poetry read by twelve masters of the stage and introduced by the sparkling comments of Joseph McLeod.

Many of the people present knew English very well, but those who did not could follow the reading, because they knew the monologues so well in the Russian. Common to all twelve actors was the amazing depth of feeling they threw into each word. The clarity of the diction, the musical beauty of the declamation, the flexibility of the phonetic transitions, the delicate finish of each phrase, the harmonious combination and emotional depth of thought, these are what the listeners retained of their auditory acquaintance with the London actors.

The last number on the programme was John Gielgud, famous for his performance in *Hamlet*. The mention of Boris Livanov, actor of the Moscow Art Theatre, was a surprise to the listeners. On learning that Livanov was studying the role of Hamlet, Gielgud dedicated his reading of this role to him.

The Moscow actor was touched by this gesture of friendship. When Morozov spoke he mentioned that the English actor was born in 1904. Livanov, with a smile, stated that he was born in the same year; London and Moscow Hamlets are of the same age.

At the conclusion of the audition, the listeners exchanged opinions and impressions. They all felt an impulse to applaud the examples of their art in Moscow. The Actors' Club that evening became a home for England's actors. This is one of the golden threads of that friendship which links in spiritual alliance the great people of Britain and the Soviet Union.

English Classics on the Leningrad Stage

AN INTERVIEW WITH NATALIA RASHEVSKAYA

WHEN I visited Natalia Rashevskaya, a well-known actress and producer of the Pushkin Theatre of Drama, Leningrad, I was impressed by her library. The spacious rooms were lined with bookshelves. Molière was here and I noticed a particularly fine old English edition of Shakespeare. I was looking at Turgenev's art albums when the actress entered the room. She is tall, with a young rosy face and white hair. She goes in for exercise and keeps fit by doing gymnastics. She is not afraid of the cold and will go hatless even in the foggy autumn weather of Leningrad. I asked her about her future plans.

"All my present work and my thoughts are bound up with the English classic drama. I am rehearsing the rôle of Emilia in *Othello* for one thing, and as producer I am preparing to stage *The School for Scandal*.

"I place particular importance on both these plays. I know England very well and have studied her culture and her traditions. Shakespeare and Sheridan mean a great deal to me."

The most difficult thing when one is playing a Shakespearean rôle is to forget that you have seen *Othello* played dozens of times. If you can do this, if you can do away with hackneyed traditions, then you will be rewarded by seeing his characters in a new light that gives them new beauty. That at any rate is how I came to see "Emilia," not as a coquettish soubrette, a fascinating artless creature, but as a woman of strong character, capable of passion and possessing a fund of worldly wisdom, a woman whose mature strength supplements, as it were, the maidenly lyricism of Desdemona.

In my work on "The School for Scandal" I endeavour to keep the play clear of everything hackneyed and try to keep it from being turned into a drawing-room play. I want to reveal the genuine passions underlying the shell of society, energy and enterprise of such colourful representatives of old England as Sir Peter Teazle and Charles Surface.

And if, in my work as producer and actress, I can give Soviet audiences even some idea of the spirit of England, it will give me the greatest satisfaction. I am particularly interested in working on English plays because I feel sure that when the war is over, Russia and Britain will devote their energies to building in freedom a peaceful life, and nations who have been friends in the common struggle will attain a closer cultural tie than ever before.



*Titania: Be kind and courteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walks and gambol in his ways.*

Leslie Banks as Bottom and Peggy Ashcroft as Titania in a scene from Act II.

THIS beautifully staged production is the fourth in the repertory at the Haymarket Theatre and is notable for Nevill Coghill's unusual treatment of the play as a Jacobean masque and the splendid acting of the company. *The Duchess of Malfi*, the latest play in the Haymarket's distinguished repertory, was added on April 18th.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream"

AT THE HAYMARKET

PICTURES BY CECIL BEATON



Helena: I am your spaniel, and Demetrius. The more you spurn me I will fawn on you.

Marian Spencer as Helena and Francis Lister as Demetrius and, in background, John Gielgud as Oberon.



Lysander: Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood

And to speak troth I have forgot our way.
Another scene in the wood in Act II, showing Patrick Crean as Lysander and Isobel Dean as Hermia.



Bottom: I have a device that shall make all plain.

Puck: Lord, what fools these mortals be.

Above, the rehearsal in the wood, and *right,* Max Adrian as Puck.



Quince: O Bless thee, Bottom, thou art translated.

L. to R.: John Blatchley as Flute, Miles Malleson as Quince, Leslie Banks as Bottom, George Woodbridge as Snout, Ernest Hare as Snug and Francis Drake as Starveling.



Left: The lovers also are bewitched in the wood, and a fierce quarrel ensues.



Bottom: O grim looked night!
O night with hue so black!

The play scene from Act III, which is one of the high spots of the production, showing *L. to R.*, Quince as Prologue, Snout as Wall, Starveling as Moonshine, Flute as Thisbe, Snug as Lion and Bottom as Pyramus.

(*Below*):

Theseus: The iron tongue of midnight hath
twelve struck
Lovers to bed, 'tis almost fairy^d
time.

The magnificent court scene from Act III, with *right*, Leon Quartermaine as Theseus and Rosalie Crutchley as Hippolyta.



(*Left*):

Oberon: So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be.

Peggy Ashcroft as Titania, John Gielgud as Oberon, and George Bryden as the Indian Boy, in the closing moments of the play.



● Jack Hylton, who presented the brilliant successful revivals *The Merry Widow* and *The Lilac Domino*, now added *Irene* to the list. This American musical comedy by James Montgomery with music by Harry Tierney, was first presented in the West End at the Empire on April 17th, 1920, when Edith Day scored brilliant success.

Irene O'Dare on the occasion of her first London appearance. Left: Pat Taylor as Irene O'Dare, the little shop girl Cinderella, and Frank Leighton as Donald Marshall, the modern Prince Charming, in Act I, Scene on the verandah of Donald Marshall's home in New York.



Scene 2. The fourth floor of a New York tenement house. Irene tells her friends about her meeting with Donald.

Arthur Riscoe as “Madame Lucy” takes in hand Irene's two friends with a view to making them, with Irene, fit to mix in society to show off his creations. Left, Doreen Duke as Jane Gilmour and right, Doreen Percheron as Helen Cheston.

Best Revival at His Majesty's Theatre

(Right):

Pat Taylor, in the Alice Blue gown which inspires the well-known theme song, "Alice Blue Gown," is seen with John Blythe (left) as Robert Harrison and Frank Leighton as Donald Marshall. Miss Taylor, one of our most vivacious and talented musical comedy stars, sings and dances the part of Irene with splendid verve, and proves herself no mean actress in this important role.



(Left):

Pat Taylor and Arthur Riscoe. Mr. Riscoe provides the humour of the piece in full measure as "Madame Lucy." He is never at a loss and contributes the big laughs of the evening. Right, Frank Leighton and Pat Taylor in one of their breath-taking dances.



Mr. Hylton's revivals have been notable for their attractive ballets, and Irene is no exception. Left, Bebe de Roland, the talented young ballerina, and dancers in the charming second act ballet.



(Left):

An amusing moment towards the end of the show. "Madame Lucy" is horrified when Irene's mother (played with real Irish zest by Mignon O'Doherty) arrives at the party in one of his creations.

(Right):

After many misunderstandings all ends happily for Irene and the rich young man, and Irene is accepted by his mother, although Irene's true identity as a shop girl has been revealed.



(Below):

The gay finale of the show. The show is produced by William Mollinson with dances and ballet staged by Freddie Carpenter and Dorothy McAusland. The lyrics are by Joseph McCarthy and the Symphony Orchestra under the expert direction of Freddie Bretherton.



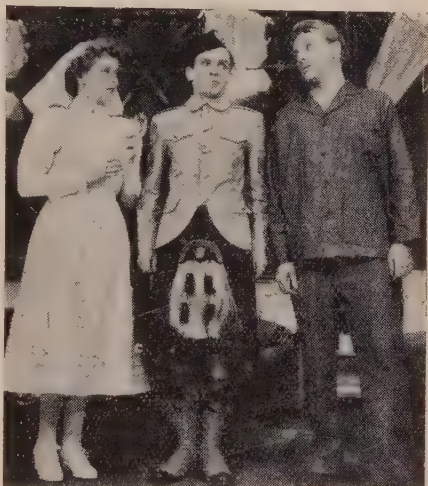
Echoes from Broadway

BY OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT E. MAWBY GREEN

THE *Hasty Heart*, a new comedy drama by John Patrick, was only a few days old on Broadway when word came from Firth Shephard that he had acquired this play for immediate production in England. That London will like this a lot, we have no doubt whatever, for it is an almost perfect blend of smiles and sentiment written from a viewpoint that is, if anything, more British than American.

John Patrick has made two or three previous interesting attempts to conquer Broadway, but never quite pulled it off, so the current success of *The Hasty Heart* is well deserved and must be a gratifying experience. The material for this last effort he gathered while serving in the Armed Forces. The scene is a convalescent ward of a British General Hospital in the rear of the Assam-Burma front and there is the usual cross-section of army types occupying five of the beds: Yank, the American; Digger, the Australian; Kiwi, the New Zealander; Tommy, the Britisher; and Blossom, a negro native. Into the remaining sixth bed comes Lachlen, a dour Scot with bagpipes and a fierce pride, who wants naught from any man and gives the same in return. The men in the ward try to break through this barrier of obstinacy and offer him their friendship, for they have been told he has but a short time to live. Lachy, unaware that his days are numbered, refuses with an exasperating stubbornness every attempt at kindness, until on his twenty-first birthday, with the aid of the ward nurse, his bedmates spring on him a royal set of kilts he had long desired but denied himself. Deeply moved and astounded that they seek nothing in return but his friendship, he gratefully accepts the gift and from then on cannot do enough for them. Unfortunately an old army regulation decrees that the doctor tell Lachy he is doomed to die. Embittered, because he feels the men have been kind to him and the nurse returned his love only out of pity, he snaps back into his shell again and accepts an offer of the army to spend his remaining days in Scotland. How they riddle through this now double armoured obstinacy constitutes the heart warming and touching climax of the play.

That on so overworked and obvious a theatrical framework has emerged such an arresting and fresh play is something of a tour de force. It is a tribute to the author's ability to create human characters and situations that are entirely believable and his exercising of a secondary dramatic sense



L-R: Anne Burr, Richard Basehart and John Lund in a scene from *The Hasty Heart*.

which knows where to draw the line between sentiment and sentimentality.

The small cast of comparative newcomers has been excellently chosen and performs with splendid skill under Bretaigne Windust's sympathetic direction. Richard Basehart is remarkable as Lachlen as is the Yank of John Lund. Anne Burr is the nurse. Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, producers of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, are again the happy producers.

Another play that has dressed up an old theme and with expert craftsmanship disguised itself into an outstanding comedy hit is Norman Krasna's *Dear Ruth*, which Moss Hart directed for his brother Bernard Hart and Joseph M. Hyman. So unoriginal is the basic story that on the same morning the rave reviews appeared Columbia Pictures calmly announced the purchase of a story with exactly the same idea, but this has not deterred Paramount from paying \$450,000 for the screen rights to *Dear Ruth*.

All this excitement is over the young high school girl who has carried on a romantic correspondence with a gunner in a Fortress signing her engaged sister's name instead of her own. Inevitably the gunner shows up on a 48-hour leave. The engaged sister, not wishing to blight the enthusiasm of the visitor, continues the hoax completely upsetting the whole family and her fiance.

Continued overleaf

Naturally the man in uniform out-maneuvres the civilian suitor and winds up with the girl to permit the final curtain to descend.

Dear Ruth is loaded with bright lines and funny bits of business and succeeds wonderfully in keeping your mind off the banal plot. It is pure escapism in the Hollywood tradition and is proving tremendously popular with theatre audiences. Moss Hart, who turned a few neat tricks in his direction of *Junior Miss*, has contributed a batch of new ones for *Dear Ruth*, one of the most delightful being the turning up of Lenore Lonergan, as the younger sister, in a role that is practically a continuation of her Fluffy Adams in *Junior Miss*. Virginia Gilmore plays the title role with consummate charm and John Dall, who you will see as the young Welsh miner opposite Bette Davis in the film version of *The Corn is Green*, has become a minor matinee idol in the part of the flyer. Warner Brothers announce that after *Dear Ruth* has run its course they will take the attractive and capable Mr. Dall back to the coast to star as Lachy in their idea of *The Hasty Heart*.

The words "A Margaret Webster Production" over a Shakespearean play is magic at the box office these days. With such triumphs as *Richard II*, *Hamlet*, *Henry IV* (part one), *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night* and *Othello* behind her since 1937, she has built up a tremendous following. The audiences that turn out are entirely different from any other seen in New York and give the impression that they haven't been out since Miss Webster's last revival. So faithful seems this following that we believe she could almost get a run out of *Titus Andronicus*. At the moment she is doing very nicely with *The Tempest*, which Cheryl Crawford is presenting.

In the Sunday Times prior to the play's arrival on Broadway, Miss Webster, as is her custom, wrote a vivid, brilliant, and illuminating analysis of *The Tempest* explaining its underlying beat of freedom. However, the production we saw was neither vivid, brilliant nor illuminating and not as rewarding as reading the play in your own library. The majority of the critics in deference to Miss Webster's authoritative Shakespearean knowledge vouchsafed *The Tempest* some nice compliments although no two could agree on what they liked about the production. The turntable setting designed by Motley, which revolved in front of your eyes to reveal different parts of the rocky island was both praised for its mechanical ingenuity, saving of scene waits and helping streamline the production and condemned for destroying all illusion. To us it became a constant source of irritation. Ballerina Vera Zorina is appearing as Ariel. Her movements and gestures are most graceful and right for the part, but her reading of the lines could use a couple of

verbal entrechats. Canada Lee, an ex-negro prizefighter and not an untalented actor, appears to considerable disadvantage as Caliban. He grunts and snorts his way through the Shakespearean verse in an incredible get-up that smacks of King Kong. Arnold Moss as Prospero gives the play its only wholly acceptable performance. Frances Heflin struggles valiantly to keep the role of Miranda from sinking into the sappy, while Vito Christi as Ferdinand never gets out of the sap. Two famous Czech comics, George Voskovec and Jan Werich, made their Broadway debuts as Trinculo and Stephano. For their comic antics Miss Webster must have gone back to her London pantomime days.

* * *

Two unusual and absorbing dramas, if not entirely satisfying ones, have added excitement and discussion to the current season: *Trio* by Dorothy and Howard Baker, adapted from the former's novel, and *One-Man Show* by Ruth Goodman and Augustus Goetz.

Trio's career has been a stormy one. Tried out in respectable Philadelphia to nice notices, this sensitive handling of a lesbian theme shocked no one there and created little stir. When it came time to move into the big city, the producer, Lee Sabinson, found himself denied a theatre by the operators who, out of the clear sky, feared censorship trouble and the shuttering of their theatres. This necessitated the closing down of the play for several weeks until a new independent theatre operator offered a haven. *Trio* opened, with the New York critics voicing praise that it was allowed a showing and their notices for the play were encouragingly interesting. Not one found the play anything but moral. *Trio* endeavoured to make a run out of it and for two months was getting moderate support at the box office when License Commissioner Paul Moss, acting on a complaining letter from a Presbyterian clergyman, closed the show. At this moment the entire theatrical profession is smarting under the blow and taking steps to fight the License Commissioner's censorship power.

Trio's triangle was made up of a girl graduate student (Lois Wheeler) who was living with a brilliant Frenchwoman (Lydia St. Clair), a professor in an American college and a young strong-minded male graduate (Richard Widmark) who was, of course, responsible for freeing the girl from the unnatural environment by bringing to her a normal love. While such a formula is pretty pat (and that was one of the faults of the play), the emotional conflict and all the subtle aspects of such a complex relationship were at times brilliantly set forth. In trying so desperately to keep the play moral, the authors hurt their play most. Everyone expected and accepted the

(Continued on page 32)

Success Stimulus

. . . . by ERIC JOHNS

JEALOUSY, according to my dictionary, is, "the uneasiness which arises from the fear that a rival may rob us of the affection of one whom we love." It is not a pretty quality to ascribe to our friends, yet the most superficial observation reveals the fact that where artists are concerned jealousy is a most effective stimulus to success, especially in the world of acting.

The actress loves her public passionately, for without their flesh-and-blood support she could not commence to exist as an artist. A writer can live the life of a recluse and still turn out novels that call for a dozen reprints. A painter can hide in a Cornish village and continue to astonish the Academy each year with his colourful canvases. A musician can set the whole world whistling with a tune composed far away from sophisticated society in the wastes of the Highlands. The public is satisfied with the book, the picture, and the melody, without being unduly curious to learn much about the people who created them. How many of us, for instance, would recognise a portrait of Sinclair Lewis, Picasso, or William Walton? Yet their genius is familiar to us all and their new work is eagerly awaited by anyone with any pretence to culture.

Yet with the actress all is different. To gain her effect she has only her body, her voice, and her appearance. Unless she is seen by her public she cannot claim to exist. The painter, the writer, and the musician can "create" in the solitude of their work-rooms and transmit their works by rail or road to an eagerly-awaiting public; but an actress who performs a moving death scene in the privacy of her own home might just as well not be born. For the actress postal transmission is impossible. She must always make a personal appearance and "create" in full view of her public, for only when her work is being contemplated by an audience does it exist. Her very life as an artist depends upon the acclamation of the masses.

Unlike the writer, the musician, and the painter, the actress has one crowded hour of glorious life and it is up to her to take the fullest advantage of her opportunities while her star is in the ascendant. The art of the novelist, the composer, and the colourist can live on long after death, and in many cases their genius may not be generally recognised until after their death. But once the actress has died her art merely lives on in the memory of those who saw her, and with the death of the last of her admirers she fades into oblivion, unless she happens to have been well written about during her lifetime. As Gertrude Stein so wisely remarks—only those artists who have been well written about can hope for immortality, since when they no longer tread the boards they leave no concrete evidence of their transitory art.

In comparison with other creative artists

the actress has a very short span of life, and as that life depends entirely upon public recognition it is only natural that she will guard the affection of her public as possessively as any mother or as restlessly as any lover. Off-stage there may be no trace of jealousy in her nature; she may not be the least disturbed when her fiancé sups with another woman; but in her professional life she will be an intensely jealous artist if she hopes for complete success. She will make certain that no rival actress robs her of the affection of her precious public.

This jealousy will goad her into giving stupendous performances that leave us lost for words, as we worship spellbound at her shrine. Such superlative artistry holds us enslaved. As long as she can sweep to such heights we are ready to follow her for a lifetime, which is all she could desire. Spurred by jealousy she offers us perfection, or as near perfection as is humanly possible,



MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL

who forty years ago vied with the other great actresses of her day in many famous roles.

bearing in mind all the elaborate technical and personal co-operation necessary for an effective stage performance—a combination of a good role, make-up, costume, décor, music, lighting, and requisite team-work of her fellow players. In return we offer her that public support which is the very life-blood of the stage player.

This enlightened jealousy or competitive rivalry is seen at its best in opera and ballet where each leading singer and dancer in turn essays the same great roles. On Monday we see Markova as "Giselle" and come away from the theatre feeling she has given us one of the greatest artistic experiences of our time. On Tuesday, as a direct challenge,

Margot Fonteyn may dance the same role. None can deny that such white-hot rivalry is good for the arts. No dancer dare rest on her laurels. The desire to emulate and eclipse the great achievements of the past may in some degree account for the superb performances of the present. Markova is acutely aware of the inspired heights touched by both Pavlova and Spessiva as "Giselle," and had she felt she could never hope to equal them, she would probably never have attempted this greatest of all ballet roles.

In opera Eva Turner may sing "Aida" one night, and Florence Austral may take it over the next. Here are two of the finest dramatic sopranos in the world, who are probably the best of friends in private life; but as artists they are keenly jealous of each other, both determined to captivate the Great Public. Nothing dare be left to chance. Only the prima donna's idea of perfection will suffice, and in consequence the opera house offers us nights never to be forgotten.

Forty years ago the theatre presented similar conditions. A limited repertoire of classical roles existed—"Magda," "Paula Tanqueray," "Hedda Gabler," "Tosca," "Marguerite Gautier"—and all the great actresses of the day, Bernhardt, Duse, Stella Patrick Campbell and the rest, gave their vivid and individual interpretation of them, just as at the Opera Melba, Tetrzzini and Patti all vied with each other as "Gilda" or "Violetta."

Every great actress was expected to make her appearance in these traditional roles which were still being played by her very able rivals, so every nerve had to be strained to capture and retain the interest, and above all, the affection of the public.

Even in our own time—in 1930—there were three first-rate Hamlets playing in London simultaneously—Gielgud at the Queen's, Moissi at the Globe, and Ainley at the Haymarket. Admittedly, each player was a pastmaster, but the presence of the other two rivals in the same role must have spurred them on to even greater heights than they had ever previously attained. Later, when Gielgud played Hamlet in New York he had the opposition of Leslie Howard in the same role at another theatre.

Rivalry also exists in the theatre at times when the competing players do not appear

in the same role, and even when their work is of a totally different calibre. Evelyn Laye gave a glorious performance as "Sari Linden" in *Bitter Sweet*, the last word in romantic operetta heroines. It is possible that such a significant achievement might have stirred Hermione Baddeley to score an equal number of marks from the playgoing public, in her own particular line. Hermione's forte is not operetta heroines, so instead she gave us the finest "Ugly Sister" of all time in "Cinderella," looking, as one critic so happily remarked, like a dirty doll that had been rescued from a dustbin. And so one actress is determined not to be eclipsed by another, even though their metier be poles apart.

That jealousy to be despised in a possessive wife is to be appreciated in an actress, since it benefits both artist and audience. The success of others stimulates her to outshine them all by endeavouring to scale a dazzling new pinnacle of her own. In so doing she gives us precious life-long memories of what in effect are the greatest performances of our time, and proves once more that theatregoing is the most exciting pastime yet devised by cultured society.

Miscellaneous Announcements

BARRY DUNCAN always has many Theatrical Books and Prints, Fashion Plates and other interesting items at the Thule Gallery, 11, St. Martin's Court, W.C.2. Tel. 1741. Between Wyndham's and Leicester Square Tube.

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Amateur Stage

LEEDS University Theatre selected Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* for a recent production. Previously they chose *Thunder Rock*, giving this play two presentations with an interval of some weeks. The method was performances for three nights, followed by a period of further study of the play, then another series of performances which reached a high standard. A correspondent points out the value for a city like Leeds to have plays of this calibre competently performed in the University's excellent Union building, bearing in mind that the commercial theatre devotes five months of the year to its pantomime.

This raises the big issue of the British public receiving, or failing to receive, the theatrical fare it demands or deserves from the professional theatre. If commercialism and big business now dominating the cinema and much of the theatre fails to satisfy the post-war public (many of whom have learned wider values through their war experiences) the alternative can be only a wide and rapid growth of small local theatres served by young professionals or amateurs performing work in sharp contrast to the average pantomime. Increase in scope and improvement in quality of amateur work is one of the essentials for a vigorous theatre in our country after the war, and there are plenty of indications it will be forthcoming. One of these will be found in the recent annual report of the National Council of Social Service, including this statement:—

"During the year the Joint Committee for Drama has surveyed the work which has been carried out over the past ten years and has reached the conclusion that there is great need for the extension of the activities of County Drama Committees and for the expenditure of larger funds for this purpose."

LONDON news includes an April production of *The Devil*, by Molnar, given by the Drama Players Theatre at Cripplegate. This city playhouse continues its popularity with amateurs. If any readers should be interested in joining the Drama Players Theatre, the secretary's address is 117, Gladstone Park Gardens, N.W.2.

W.5 Dramatic Club are resuming activities after a short break, but badly need new male members. An indication of production policy is *Pygmalion*, recently toured around gunsites. Club headquarters are at 40a, High Street, Ealing, W.5.

A civic playhouse opened at Cheltenham on Easter Monday for the presentation of plays by amateur dramatic societies. The corporation provided the theatre, which has been converted from the old Montpelier Spa Baths; the stage equipment, and the publicity, and everything else will be left to the societies. *Arms and the Man* was the opening piece.

Whispers from the Wings

by LOOKER ON

THE first thing that strikes one about Cathleen Nesbitt is that she is the last person one would expect to see in a sinister role, so calm and friendly is her bearing. It is proof indeed of her outstanding gift as an actress that she has essayed the most diverse parts from Shakespeare to modern thriller, and in some astonishing way is able to harden the features of a face that is unusually soft in contour. In the thriller at St. Martin's she appears as an elderly and excitable Frenchwoman, complete with broken English accent, and here again she has got into the skin of the part with extraordinary skill.

If further proof were needed of her versatility, remember also her Mrs. Hardcastle in *Love on the Dole*; her Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the fact that, according to *Who's Who in the Theatre*, her favourite parts are *Mona in Spring Cleaning* and *Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra*.

I looked in to see her in her dressing room remembering that it was at St. Martin's she appeared in that big success, *Loyalties*. It was good to recall two other triumphs of pre-war years, *The Case of the Frightened Lady* and *Children in Uniform* in which Miss Nesbitt gave outstanding performances.

We did not talk exclusively of the theatre, for prominent in her dressing room is a delightful snap of Miss Nesbitt with her tall and good looking son and daughter, both now in the forces. The former, who is a Captain, is somewhere on the road to Berlin. Neither is seeking a stage career, Miss Nesbitt told me, and that gave us a cue to wondering what the future will hold for our young people and how it will be possible for those of us who are further along the road and have two world wars in memory, to forge the links with the very young in the new age ahead.

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Echoes from Broadway (Continued)

normal boy and girl love, but it was in the older woman who finally committed suicide that the makings of a tragic figure and a greater play rested, but the authors neglected to take full advantage of her.

Lydia St. Clair gave one of the finest performances of the year and worked beautifully with the less experienced Lois Wheeler and Richard Widmark under the again keenly sensitive direction of Bretaigne Windust. Stewart Chaney designed the two exciting settings.

Jed Harris, who gave us that unforgettable production of *The Green Bay Tree* has endeavoured to duplicate that success with a play in a similar vein, *One-Man Show*, only now we are concerned with a father-daughter relationship bordering on the abnormal. From the deft dialogue dispersed in the early stages, you have the feeling that the groundwork is being prepared for a sophisticated comedy about this man and his daughter who run a small art gallery in New York. Unfortunately the script goes Freudian in a most unconvincing way. You never feel it psychiatically sound. This time the affectionate link between the father and daughter is broken by a nice young alcoholic. They go off to live happily ever after leaving the father to dust off and dispose of his pictures by himself. We find ourselves suspect of the endings of both *One-Man Show* and *Trio*, for fixations that have festered so long cannot be convincingly solved by merely having the boy and girl write it off as part of the past.

For all the unconvincing elements in the play, *One-Man Show* still has some well-written passages and treats you to flawless direction by Mr. Harris; impressive performances by Constance Cummings, Frank Conroy and James Rennie; and a handsome setting by Stewart Chaney. It is far above the average production.

After doing bumper business around America for 250 performances, Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca* braved New York and withdrew after two weeks. Being an isolated instance of one who never saw the famous film or read the novel, we can report without prejudice that this stage version told its story badly and made for a confused and colourless evening in the theatre. The acting by Bramwell Fletcher, Florence Reed and Diana Barrymore under the shoddy and old-fashioned direction of Clarence Derwent added up to much ado about nothing.

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